

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 DHA-05 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00
OMB-01 EUR-12 /104 W
-----072429 291443Z /50

R 251157Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0511
INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GABORONE 1991

DEPT PASS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG US BC
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: REQUEST FOR MULTI-LATERAL
INFORMATION ON HOST GOVERNMENTS

REF: A) STATE 191998 B) 76 STATE 037591

1. SUMMARY: GOB'S INTEREST IN UN IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO UN
INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. WITH LATTER INVOLVEMENT DEEPENING
DAILY, GOB STAKE IN IT IS RAPIDLY INCREASING. BOTSWANA ITSELF
TOOK INITIATIVE LAST JANUARY OF RAISING IN UNSC THE ISSUE OF
REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF ITS TERRITORY BY RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES.
U.S. ABSTENTION ON UNSC RESOLUTION STILL RANKLES AND IS ONLY NOW
BEING OVERCOME WITH U.S. POSITIVE RESPONSE TO FARAH MISSION
APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE IN MEETING URGENT GOB SECURITY/DEVELOPMENT
NEEDS. GOB NATIONAL INTEREST IN UN IS NOW FULLY ENGAGED AS A
RESULT OF AFFIRMATIVE UN ACTIONS IN HELPING ACHIEVE PEACEFUL
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SOLUTIONS TO CONFLICTS IN ALL THREE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES:
RHODESIA, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. GOB LOOKS TO OAU RESOLUTIONS
AS PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF GUIDANCE BUT NEVER RELINQUISHES ITS
INDEPENDENCE. ITS UNDEL MUST REFER CONTENTIOUS ISSUES HERE FOR
GUIDANCE. ITS OFFICIALS ARE CONTROLLED. EFFECTIVE GOB AND EXTAFF
MINISTRY BACKSTOPPING IS ASSURED BY DEPUTY PERMSEC MOGAMI WHO
WAS BOTSWANA'S PERMREP TO UN FOR FOUR YEARS. FOLLOWING REPORT

FOLLOWS GUIDELINES OF REF B, PARA 7.

2. INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES. THE GOB REGARDS THE UN AS A SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE IN ACHIEVING NATIONAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES. RECENT EXPERIENCE HAS CONFIRMED THE USEFULNESS OF THE UN ON SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO BOTSWANA. LAST JANUARY 14, FOR EXAMPLE, AN SC RESOLUTION WAS PASSED (WITH U.S. ABSTAINING) EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR BOTSWANA IN CONFRONTING ARMED INCURSIONS FROM RHODESIA. THIS RESULTED IN THE MISSION OF ASYG FARAH WHOSE REPORT HAS PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR REQUESTING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN MEETING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AS A RESULT OF DIVERSION OF FUNDS TO BOTSWANA'S DEFENSE FORCE. IN ADDITION TO THESE HIGHLY "INTERESTED" REASONS FOR TAKING ITS UN ROLE SERIOUSLY, THE GOB ALSO PUTS FAITH IN THE UN AS FORUM FOR BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. ITS OBJECTIVES ARE FOCUSED ON THE WORK OF THREE UN COMMITTEES: DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE; COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA; AND ANTI-APARTHEID COMMITTEE. IN THE WORDS OF ONE LEADING EXTAFFMIN OFFICIAL, ANY INITIATIVES THE GOB MIGHT TAKE AT UNGAS WOULD BE IN THE FORM OF SUPPORT FOR RESOLUTIONS EMANATING FROM ONE OF THESE COMMITTEES OR ITS AFRICAN CHAIRMEN. THIS TACTIC OF OPERATING INDIRECTLY IS CHARACTERISTIC OF BOTSWANA WHICH, ALTHOUGH A LARGE COUNTRY (THE SIZE OF FRANCE), HAS A SMALL-COUNTRY COMPLEX; IT RECOGNIZES ITS LIMITED INFLUENCE AND CONFINES ITS INITIATIVES TO AREAS AND ISSUES WHERE ITS INTERESTS ARE MOST DIRECTLY AFFECTED.

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3. INFLUENCES OF DECISIONMAKING. GIVEN THE GOB'S CONCENTRATION ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT OAU RESOLUTIONS PROVIDE THE "GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF INSTRUCTIONS" FOR GOB DELEGATION TO THE UN. CLEARLY, THE OAU IS THE GROUPING TO WHICH GOB LOOKS IN FIRST INSTANCE FOR GUIDANCE ON ISSUES. HOWEVER, GOB IS NOT A BLIND FOLLOWER OF ANY GROUPING AND DOES NOT HESITATE TO ASSERT ITS INDEPENDENCE ON ISSUES WHERE ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE. FOR EXAMPLE, ITS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY (INDEED ITS SURVIVAL) DEPENDS UPON IMPORTS FROM AND THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA. GOB POLICY IS, THEREFORE, TO "ABSTAIN OR VOTE FOR AND EXPLAIN" ITS VOTE ON PROPOSED TRADE SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. WE DOUBT THAT GOB WOULD TAKE ANY STEPS THAT WOULD RESULT IN INCREASED PUBLICITY FOR ITS STAND IN OPPOSITION TO SANCTIONS, BUT IT DOES NOT HESITATE TO MAKE ITS POSITION CLEAR EVEN THOUGH IT MAY BE UNPOPULAR.

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4. INTERNAL WORKINGS. THE GOV DELEGATION IS NOT FULLY INSTRUCTED AT UN OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. AS NOTED ABOVE, OAU RESOLUTIONS PROVIDE A GENERAL FRAMEWORK. HOWEVER, ON ANY SIGNIFICANT OR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE, BOTSWANA'S UNDEL IS OBLIGED TO REPORT ISSUES, FACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXTAFF MINISTRY. FINAL DECISION RESTSWITH GOB, OFTEN WITH PRESIDENT KHAMA HIMSELF WHO, ACCORDING TO GOV OFFICIALS, FOLLOWS UN ISSUES WITH INTEREST AND DOES NOT HESITATE TO MAKE HIS VIEWS KNOWN. IT IS REALISTIC TO ASSUME, THEREFORE, THAT INTERVENTIONS HERE CAN (IF THEY ARE TIMELY AND PERSUASIVE) HAVE AN EFFECT ON BOTSWANA'S VOTES IN THE UN. DELEGATION ARE CONTROLLED BY GOV, SPECIFICALLY WHEN SIGNIFICANT OR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES ARE INVOLVED.

5. PERMREP POWER. FOLLOWING ON FROM THE ABOVE, IT CAN BE SAID THAT NO GOB REP AT UN OR ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, HAS INDEPENDENTPOLITICAL POSITION WHICH WOULD MAKE ITS REP DIFFICULT FOR GOB TO CONTROL OR INSTRUCT.

6 CONSULTATIONAND CONTACT WITH U.S. FROM EXPERIENCE IN DAILY
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DEALINGS WITH GOB, PARTICULARLY OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT CONSULTATION WITH THE U.S. IS APPRECIATED AND FULLY ACCEPTED. IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON THIS POINT, AMB MOGAMI SAID BOTSWANA UNDEL WOULD APPRECIATE EVEN CLOSER CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION-SHARING WITH USUN AT FORTHCOMING UNGA'S EXPLAINING THIS INTEREST, MOGAMI SAID BOTSWANA HAS

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY "TO KNOW MORE THAN THE OTHERS" BECAUSE OF ITS ROLE AS FORNTLINE STATE. HE SPECIFICELLY MENTIONED NEED TO KEEP ABREAST OF DISCUSSIONS ON NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE. FROM HIS RECENT EXTENSIVE TOUR (FOUR YEARS) AS GOB PERMREP, HE ADDED THAT SUCH CONSULTATIONS SHOULD CAUSE NO PROBLEM ASSUMING THEY REMIAIN SOMEWHAT DISCREET. HE EXPECTED GOV UNDEL MIGHT WELL TAKE INITIATIVE WITH USUN IF THE ATMOSPHERE SEEMED FAVORABLE. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE COMMENTED CRITICALLY ONSOVIET UN MISSION INITIATIVES IN 1975 AND 1976 IN CONSULTING PRIVATELY WITH A SELECTED AFRICAN GROUP (RE ANGOLA). MOGAMI SAID THESE PRIVATE CONSULTATIONSWERE RESENTED BY MAJORITY OF AFRICANS WHEN THEY BACAME KNOWN. FINALLY, HE SAID HE HOPED THE ERA OF "ARM TWISTING" WAS OVER; "NOBODY LIKES IT AND IT IS IS USUALLY NOT EFFECTIVE", HE SAID.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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